

FINAL MEETING SUMMARY

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING February 1, 2006 Kennewick, WA

Topics in this Meeting Summary

<i>Welcome and Introductions</i>	1
<i>Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) Agencies 2006 Strategy for Public Involvement</i>	1
<i>Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement (TC&WM EIS)</i>	5
<i>Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) Member Outreach</i>	7
<i>Committee Business</i>	8
<i>Handouts</i>	8
<i>Attendees</i>	8

This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of ideas discussed or opinions given, and should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.

Welcome and Introductions

Norma Jean Germond, Public Involvement and Communications Committee (PIC) Chair, welcomed the committee and introductions were made. The committee adopted the November 2005 committee meeting summary with a few minor edits.

Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) Agencies 2006 Strategy for Public Involvement

Karen Lutz, Department of Energy – Richland Operations Office (DOE-RL), gave an overview of the proposed TPA 2006 Strategy for Public Involvement that had been presented at the TPA Quarterly Public Involvement meeting earlier in the day.

The agencies—DOE, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)—received a lot of public feedback this year about their performance; what they were doing wrong, what they were doing well, and how they can improve. They outlined some public involvement opportunities, which are detailed in the “Public Involvement/Outreach Strategy” Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies’ presentation. Currently, the agencies plan on conducting local and regional budget outreach by having a public budget workshop with all TPA leadership attending. Standardized budget materials and an informational budget webpage will be developed. April 15th is the last day to influence the budget; additional budget and general outreach will continue through June.

Agencies will also individually conduct and represent the TPA agencies at different identified budget outreach areas (Tri-Cities, Seattle, Columbia Gorge, Portland). They want to reach a broader public and intend to use existing organizations previously underutilized, such as Rotary. The general public doesn’t necessarily engage in Hanford issues, but by engaging them initially, they can then decide if they want to be more involved.

The agencies intend to establish an improved feedback mechanism. In lieu of the State of the Site (SOS) meetings, the agencies are recommending two things: 1) A Hanford Fair/Open House

during the day where people will have the opportunity to walk around, look at displays and visuals, and talk to managers one-on-one, and 2) Host an evening reception (“Senior Leadership Forum”) with all agencies’ senior managers present where the public can have the opportunity for interactive dialogue. Karen stressed the one-on-one dialogue opportunities.

Dennis Faulk, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), said that he wanted to note that those attending the TPA quarterly meeting were not happy with the plan and it may need revision. Dennis also said that from his perspective, the agencies have been in a “rut” and that they were trying to shake things up, get excited about the process this year, and get out to a larger public. He also said there has to be good information in order to have a meaningful discussion about the budget. As far as the SOS meetings, the agencies are trying to float some new concepts.

Committee Discussion

- Committee members wondered what the committee’s priority topics would be, since the TPA public involvement strategy had already been discussed at the TPA Quarterly meeting.
- Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues, said it couldn’t be assumed that everyone in the PIC committee knows what happened at the TPA quarterly meeting. She also said that at the TPA quarterly meeting, the issues were discussed from the point of view of the agency or group that each person represented. Now, at the PIC committee meeting, the issues need to be looked at from the perspective of a Hanford Advisory Board (HAB or Board) and PIC member. She asked the committee to discuss whether the strategy should be presented to the full Board, and what, if any, feedback the committee would like to take to the full board meeting the next day. Committee members agreed the proposal should be covered at the full board meeting, and that other board members, who hadn’t attended either the TPA quarterly or the PIC meeting might have significant input to add.
- Ken Niles asked Karen if the agencies proposed only one meeting in Oregon for the SOS meetings. Karen responded that, while the plan wasn’t completely refined, they were planning on having one “Leadership Forum” in Oregon. Ken replied that last year they were unhappy that Hood River was excluded; he believes there is enough interest in Hood River and Portland to have two Oregon meetings.
- Committee members discussed the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) Five Year Review and the public outreach planned for it. Some members suggested trying to combine CERCLA 5-year review public meetings with the Tank Closure & Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement (TC&WM EIS) meetings. Others thought it would be daunting to try to combine. Dennis Faulk replied that while combining has appeal, it seems the topic matters are too big for combining to be successfully done. He said the most important function of the 5-year review is to answer the question of where we are in the cleanup process now, so as to know where our final cleanup will be over the long term. The TC&WM EIS is trying to give a site-wide picture at Hanford. CERCLA is just one piece of the puzzle.
- Shelley Cimon had several comments on the agencies’ public involvement strategy: 1) The public turnout at a daytime event will not be very good, 2) Accountability is very important and one-on-one dialogue between a member of the public and an agency representative doesn’t allow for much accountability, 3) An evening panel session would be more valuable and accountable, and 4) The agencies were proposing changing the name of the meetings

from “State of the Site” to a “Leadership Forum.” She thought there was good name recognition already and changing the name could lead to low turnout.

- Nolan Curtis, Ecology, said that the public outreach meetings could be called anything, but that in his view, if the public outreach meetings are in fact different, then they should be called something different. They shouldn’t be called the “State of the Site” if it isn’t what the SOS has historically been. The feedback the agencies received about the SOS meetings wasn’t very good last year, and the agencies had to decide how to make them better and more meaningful. He thought there are two major components: The need for people to get information about Hanford and how the leadership will meet with the public. This is where the fair idea came from, a chance for all presenters, and a forum for all perspectives. The agencies thought the fair would be a good, shared opportunity and venue. There was a lot of debate over how the agency leadership can meet with the public, but the agencies thought that one-on-one and public dialogue would provide a good opportunity.
- Betty Tabbutt said that the SOS meetings discuss sticky problems and in order to incorporate any budget discussion, there has to be an easily understandable chart or graph from DOE so the public can properly react and comment. She said there couldn’t be a good public meeting without clear budget information. For example, the TC&WM EIS involves bringing more waste to Hanford and the public will want to know where the money is for dealing with that extra waste. How will all these things be addressed in one meeting? You have to connect public comment to the budget.
- Jim Trombold discussed the difficulty of getting people out for a public meeting, and said that if you manage to get good turnout, even if the meeting becomes longer, you shouldn’t have separate meetings for separate subjects. He thought that the Hanford Fair sounded tolerable, but thinks that the daytime turnout would be poor. The evening meetings could incorporate the one-on-one aspect, and include agency statements and encourage questions.
- Susan Leckband commented that the conversation had been very enlightening - change is good. One-on-one dialogue is good, but it neglects the importance of one neighbor to hear another. At the SOS meeting in Seattle, there was too much time spent talking *at* the public, and the meeting was too long. The meetings would be better if the public could speak sooner, and also if the topics could be connected to the budget. “Advertising” should be eliminated – let the public ask questions and get answers in a forum where everyone can hear and respond.
- Shelley suggested having the fair an hour before an evening panel session; Karen responded that she thinks that has been tried before. Nolan says they would take that suggestion back to management.
- Helen Wheatley expressed disappointment at the schedule vagueness – the lack of public outreach meeting dates and the lack of budget information. Norma Jean agreed: There needs to be a timeframe allowing enough time to get out meeting information in a newsletter.
- Dennis said with the current time frame, the public outreach meetings (State of the Site) probably wouldn’t be organized until September. By default, the budget will not be important at those public outreach meetings because of the time frame. Is budget public dialogue something that should be accomplished? What is being proposed?
- Gerry Pollet said that no one is listening to his constituency; they wanted five public meetings, not four. Also, the budget is a big deal – leadership agencies should be there.

Budget is almost more important than State of the Site given where things are right now. Gerry said that the Spokane meeting was good last year and that this year he expects public meetings, not just “coffee shop” meetings, and a minimum 30 days notice.

- Shelley noted that the last week of March is spring break for most Oregon students. Dennis said they are targeting the second or last week of March for the Hood River meeting.
- Karen wanted to clarify that there will definitely be local and regional public meetings and that there will be further discussion regarding the particular forum. She also said the agencies have committed to budget meetings throughout the region.
- Betty asked if there is a compilation of the public comments made during last year’s SOS meetings on tying the budget to substantive issues on site. Were there a lot of issues that trigger questions about funding? She said there isn’t much reason to have a SOS meeting if you aren’t collecting input on how money is spent. Tim Hill, Ecology, said they have SOS meeting comments collected.
- Dennis said he has not seen the consolidated list. Betty asked if the comments should be responded to, and then asked Nolan how the budget compares to the issues. Nolan said that they would know on February 7. Dennis said that at the State of the Site meeting in Seattle there were different ideas and feedback on the state of the budget, but there was little action in response.
- Susan said there has to be a certain amount of time to plan meetings once the preliminary information on the budget is released on February 7th. Is it useful for public input on the budget if there isn’t detailed budget information?
- Dennis said, for example, in framing priorities, the public emphasized river protection, so a lot of money was put into river corridor cleanup. Is our current budget situation a repercussion of that, or are we simply not getting enough money? We need to prioritize – if we were given all the money in the world, what would we use it for?
- Jerry emphasized that the agencies need to be present in public meetings, each presenting their own views, and not representing the other agencies. He also said it makes no sense to hold meetings before there is budget information and that there needs to be time to prepare information for the public so they can have an effective voice.
- Maynard Plahuta said that budget detail is helpful, but maybe not necessary for the general public. It is most important to have input on the big items, where we are going, where we are falling short, what is not getting done, what is vulnerable, etc.
- Keith Smith commented that long-term impact implications are important and that there is often a domino effect – something that isn’t completed now has an impact on later projects.
- Greg said if we don’t put an effort into public involvement now, the budget would continue to decrease because the public won’t pressure DOE for more money. The budget has always increased every year, until now. Now it is hugely decreasing – this is critically important. Greg said Karen had said that she is waiting on information from the Department of Energy-Headquarters (DOE-HQ) to see how much information the site will be able to release about the budget request. Greg said that as taxpayers, it’s our right to know. Greg also said he wanted DOE to give examples of how funding has been put back into new Hanford projects

once other sites were completed, as had been promised when the accelerated cleanup plan was announced. Susan said that DOE printed a retraction six months ago regarding the statement that when a project is completed at other sites, the extra money would flow to Hanford. She said DOE Headquarters (DOE-HQ) said that would never happen.

Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement (TC&WM EIS)

Mary Beth Burandt, DOE-Office of River Protection (ORP), provided a report on the status of the TC&WM EIS and provided a brief history for the committee: The Solid Waste EIS was issued, there were lawsuits, and a settlement agreement was formed between DOE and Ecology after a review process that found groundwater, transportation, and human health analysis errors. DOE and Ecology agreed to redo the Solid Waste EIS. It was decided to combine it with the Tank Closure EIS, which is why it is now called the Tank Closure and Waste Management EIS. Last week, it was also decided to add the Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF) into the expanded EIS.

A notice of intent for the EIS is to be published on February 2nd, 2006, in the Federal Register. Mary Beth also brought a copy of the notice for the public meetings. Scoping had already been completed separately on the Tank Closure EIS and the Solid Waste EIS, but DOE will go through the formal scoping process again for the combined TC&WM EIS. DOE has already accepted public comment on the two separate EISes before they were combined; however, comments may be submitted again and will be considered.

Regulator perspective

Nolan Curtis said that Suzanne Dahl, who would be at the Board meeting the next day, was the appropriate person to provide Ecology's perspective on the TC&WM EIS public involvement efforts.

Committee Discussion

- Greg deBruler stated that less than 30 days for public comment is not enough time. Marybeth said that scoping had already been completed for the two previous EISes, before they were combined, and there were public meetings held for both and comments were accepted. She also said that she thinks the Tri Party Agreement community relations plan says they would "strive" to have 30 days notice for public meetings. She also said they would be reviewing the previously submitted comments.
- Dennis asked for clarification – is scoping starting over? Or is it a continuation? Mary Beth confirmed that scoping would start over.
- Gerry Pollet said that Ecology is a cooperating agency. He also said it is a substantive problem if the notification period is not adequate, and that 21 days of notice is not adequate. The short notice doesn't allow citizen groups to properly reach their constituents, and meaningful public meetings can't be expected with that timeframe. He thought he would have heard Ecology object immediately. He questioned how the means of notice would be worded – will the words "high-level nuclear waste" be included? He said that mailing notice is required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for whoever commented on the Solid Waste EIS. Mary Beth responded that there would be a newspaper advertisement and postcards, and that they were starting the NEPA process over and keeping old comments and accepting new comments. The postcards will be sent to the Hanford Mailing List.

- Gerry reiterated that the scoping notice should be sent to whoever commented on the Solid Waste EIS.
- For clarification, Todd asked if the Board needed to resubmit comments from the Solid Waste EIS; Mary Beth said no, that if you have submitted before, you do not need to again. Todd then brought up that the comment period closes March 4th. The next opportunity for the Board to provide advice is April 7, therefore, comments could be submitted a full month after the scoping period closes. He asked if there were any alternatives, or if the Board needed to propose new ones; Mary Beth again said to send in comments if you have them.
- Betty asked if the EIS would address compliance with state and federal law, especially if there is a state law mandating that current waste be cleaned up before importing more. Mary Beth responded that, in an EIS, you state the action desired, then you identify everything that needs to be addressed before the action is taken. Betty then asked if that included CERCLA off-site waste prohibition and if CERCLA can change state law. Mary Beth responded that CERCLA is not intended to change state law – it gives a reasonable range of alternatives. Betty thinks that the public needs a sense of how the EIS fits with existing state and federal law.
- Greg thinks it would be naïve to let previous comments stand alone, and that he wants to see documentation of work that's been done on the previous EISes, so he can see what has been learned from past mistakes. He said that 90 days for public comment would be more appropriate and that a fast-track attempt to get the new EIS scoping completed will not result in a quality product. He also stated that he wants a copy of the SAIC groundwater analysis.
- Jim asked if comments do not need to be resubmitted, how do we know that the comments will actually be considered for the new EIS? What is the assurance that the comments will be included in the process? He is concerned with DOE actually incorporating original comments. Mary Beth said that comments will be reviewed, but people should feel free to comment again if they want to. She also clarified that the TC&SW EIS draft is projected for 2007.
- Helen asked why the process seemed fast-tracked. Mary Beth responded that once the settlement agreement was signed, DOE and Ecology wanted to move forward with the EIS and they picked a date and ran with it.
- Norma Jean suggested that “the world would not end” if the March 4th scoping deadline was extended to allow more public comment. Mary Beth said she could not comment on that, but that scoping meetings will not change because everything is booked.
- Al Boldt asked if there was a response document for scoping comments; Mary Beth said they will take comments into account while preparing the EIS, but there will be no response document during the scoping phase. In the EIS draft, it will show the comments received and how the alternatives were changed.
- Al then asked how the new TC&SW EIS will incorporate all the previously separate comments effectively; he also said he will probably resubmit all of his old comments along with new ones or else they could be “swept under the rug.” Mary Beth again said to resubmit if he would like, and that DOE is not trying to inhibit anyone from commenting.

- Keith Smith asked whether Purex tunnels would be included in the scope of the EIS. Penny reminded committee members that scoping comments would be considered in the technical committees, the purpose of this committee was to discuss public involvement issues. Keith replied his concerns keep being ignored no matter where he brings it up.
- Todd acknowledged that everyone is nervous on how previous documents will be incorporated; he also said that all of the Board's advice requires a written response from DOE and that sooner or later it will land on Mary Beth's desk and she will have to respond.
- Susan said that it is clear that the timeline is too short, but also that DOE is saying that it's too bad. She suggested a website containing comments that were received from the last EISes because those who commented won't be able to review things because of the time constraint. Public viewing of past comments is necessary.

After discussing the difference between a Board letter and Board advice (advice requires a response from the agencies, a letter does not), the committee discussed how to state their concerns with the scoping period and agreed to develop draft advice for the Board meeting. The principles the committee came to consensus on for the advice were:

1. Length of scoping period, 2. Wording of the public notice, 3. Breadth of public notification (more avenues).

Dennis wanted committee members to be aware that the TPA Community Relations Plan does not cover NEPA actions; early on the agencies agreed that they only have to comply with the spirit of the TPA Community Relations Plan for NEPA actions.

Betty, Helen, and Susan agreed to draft the advice based on the three consensus principles.

Greg asked if a specific number of days for public comment could be included in the advice. After some debate, it was decided that the advice should recommend the public comment period be extended to April 10th, 2006.

Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) Member Outreach

During the last PIC meeting, the members were developing a proposal for a process to promote the availability of Board members as speakers for outreach on the Board and on Hanford.

Committee Discussion

Norma Jean brought up the past discussion about the availability of HAB members as public speakers. She stated that it was important to note that if a HAB member is a speaker, they represent their own group (e.g. Columbia River Keepers), not the Board. The Hanford videos that Pam presented at the November committee meeting were brought up again as available for use. Norma Jean talked about having a list of speakers on the website with links to the organization they represent. Ken put some talking points together as a resource for those Board members who would like an outline; copies were handed out to the PIC committee.

Penny summarized: The PIC committee agreed that it wants to make known to the public that speakers are available and that the committee thinks it should use the HAB website to promote that. She proposed the idea be taken to the Board first, and then the committee could spend more time on the details of the presentation.

For the Board speaker outreach (“Speakers’ Bureau”), Penny requested consensus for a proposal to be made to the Board on Friday. There were a few questions regarding names on the website, contact phone numbers, and whether members’ names would be linked to their organization, but Penny thought there was already a good enough structure to make a proposal to the Board on Friday. She said the details could be worked out after the Board backs the proposal.

Committee Business

Susan brought a full-size draft of the Hanford Display Board and explained it. The committee complimented it and Jim requested a copy of the display board for his organization; Susan said she would send him the information. With a few minor edits, the board will be produced for the April Board meeting.

The committee agreed a February committee call was needed; it will be on February 16, 2006 at 11:30 a.m.

Handouts

- Public Involvement Outreach/Activities Strategy, TPA agencies
- A Basic Hanford Presentation, “Talking Points;” Ken Niles

Attendees

HAB Members and Alternates

Al Boldt	Jerri Main	Keith Smith
Shelley Cimon	Todd Martin	Betty Tabbutt
Greg deBruler	Ken Niles	Jim Trombold
Earl Fordham	Bob Parazin	Charles Weems
Norma Jean Germond	Maynard Plahuta	Helen Wheatley
Susan Leckband	Gerry Pollet	

Others

Karen Lutz, DOE-RL	Nolan Curtis, Ecology	Karen Caddey, CH2MHill
Erik Olds, DOE-ORP	Tim Hill, Ecology	Joy Shoemake, CH2MHill
	Dennis Faulk, EPA	Hillary Johnson, EnviroIssues
		Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues
		Barbara Wise, Fluor Hanford
		Carol Cizauskas, NW News Network (Public Radio)
		Bob Cazosin, visitor